



**Snohomish County**  
Planning and Development  
Services

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This Assistance Bulletin only applies to property within unincorporated Snohomish County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

Assistance Bulletin

# Code Interpretations

# #61

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**Keyword: Assistance Bulletins**

## Q: What is a code interpretation?

**A:** A code interpretation authorized by [Chapter 30.83](#) SCC is a decision by the County made to clarify ambiguous provisions of the development code applied to a specific project, determine nonconforming rights, determine whether a use is allowed in a particular zone, and interpret the meaning of terms. Code interpretations described in this bulletin pertain to code interpretations of the development code (Title 30 SCC), but exclude code interpretations for the construction and fire codes in Subtitle 30.5 SCC.

## Q: Who can request a code interpretation?

**A:** Any interested person may request a general code interpretation. Only an applicant for a project may request an interpretation relating to a specific project. A request for a code interpretation should explain why the interpretation is necessary and provide reasons in support of a particular interpretation of the code.

## Q: What form is used to submit an interpretation request?

**A:** No specific form is used. The request must simply be made in writing, and it can be submitted in letter form (with attachments, if necessary). SCC 30.83.020(2) outlines minimal submittal requirements.

## Q: Where do I submit a request for a code interpretation?

**A:** Your request should be submitted to the PDS Customer Support Center, 2nd Floor, Robert J. Drewel Building, M/S 604, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, WA 98201. The fee will be collected at the time of submittal. You will need to schedule a submittal appointment. Please call 425-388-3311, ext. 2790 to schedule the appointment.

## Q: How is a code interpretation processed?

**A:** Code interpretations are processed as a Type 1 decision. The review process for a Type 1 request includes a public notice and comment period. The decision may be appealed to the County Hearing Examiner using the provisions for appeals in Chapter 30.71 SCC.

## Q: Who prepares a code interpretation decision?

**A:** The decision is prepared by PDS, and sometimes by the Department of Public Works, depending on which provision of Title 30 SCC is in need of interpretation.

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change.  
For complete legal information, refer to Snohomish County Code.

**Q:** Can a code interpretation decision be appealed?

**A:** Yes. The County Hearing Examiner will consider the appeal in accordance with the appeal provisions of [Chapter 30.71](#) SCC.

**Q:** Can I request a code interpretation that relates to a pending development permit application?

**A:** Yes, but only if you are the applicant for the permit application. Persons other than the applicant may either challenge the department's interpretation of a code provision at the public hearing for the underlying permit, or appeal an administrative permit issued by the department where a code interpretation is an issue. The County will suspend the processing of a permit application for a Code Interpretation only at the request of the permit applicant.

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